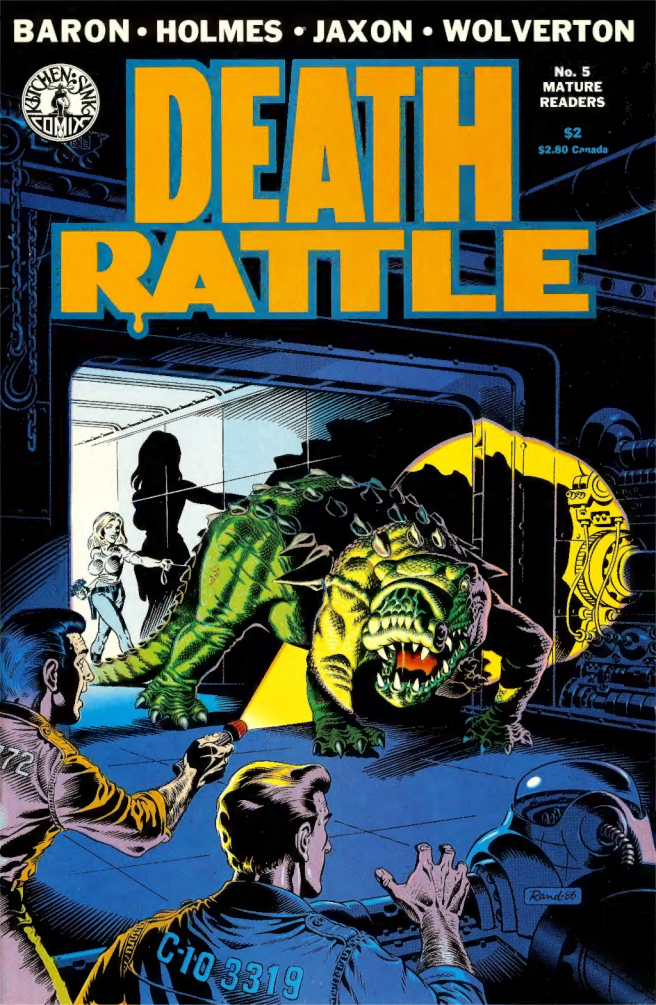
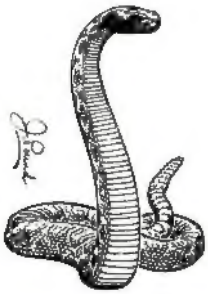
BARON • HOLMES • JAXON • WOLVERTON





RATTLER

The fifth issue of ***Death Rattle*** is the last color issue in this series. We're not mourning, however, because we'll still be coming out in black and white every other month. The price of a single copy will be $1.95, and it will still be printed on quality paper, so you archivists out there won't have trouble preserving disintegrating, rotting, putrid copies that look like they've just risen zombified from a **Graham Ingels** story. We'll still be printing atmospheric stories of the unusual, the eerie, the—dare we say it—ghastly.

So let's rejoice, not mourn, because ***Death Rattle*** No. 5 has a sterling crew of artists and writers whose only wish is to startle and thrill you.

Once again, artist **Rand Holmes** and writer **Mike Baron** team on a story. This time, it's a 14-page spectacular called "Junkyard Dog." Holmes pencilled, inked and colored the cover based on the story. This is one tale that will keep you guessing!

We have a special treat for all you followers of the classics. **Basil Wolverton** is acknowledged as one of the greatest artists of the weird who ever sat at a drawing board. His "little lines" technique, his extraordinary characters and his strange stories have earned him a well-deserved following among artists and readers. We're reprinting his classic "Robot Woman" from the early 1950s, newly colored by us to reveal his painstaking linework and bizarre figures. You'll rave over this one!

Finally, **Jaxon** returns with the third installment of "Bulto...The Cosmic Slug," in which the Spaniards and the followers of the cosmic deity begin to clash over the one thing they have in common—silver.

Mike Newhall colored all these stories in a marathon session, maintaining his usual high professional standards under the ominous weight of a brutal deadline. After he completed the last story, he came in with a strange look in his eye, his hair disheveled, barely coherent. He mumbled something about meditating in the swamp awhile and shambled out the door. Take it easy there, Mike...

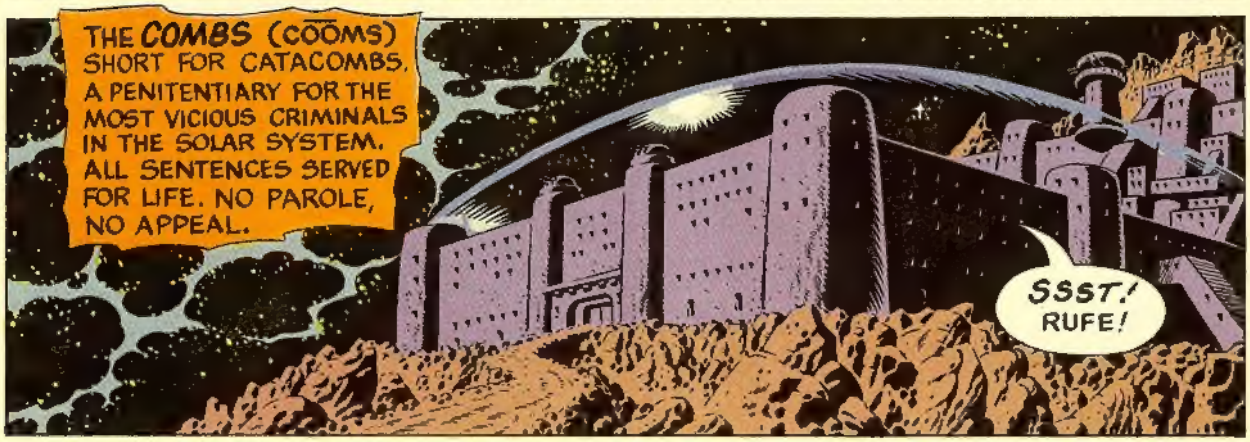
NEXT ISSUE: In ***Death Rattle*** 6, **Rand Holmes** teams with **Jan Strnad** for the first time ever on a story called "Babysitter." Former ***Swamp Thing*** artist **Steve Bissette** teams with **Tom Veitch** (who worked with the late **Greg Irons** many times in ***Slow Death*** and others) on "Road Kill." And **Jaxon** returns again with the fourth installment of "Bulto." Watch for ***Death Rattle*** No. 6 in **August.**

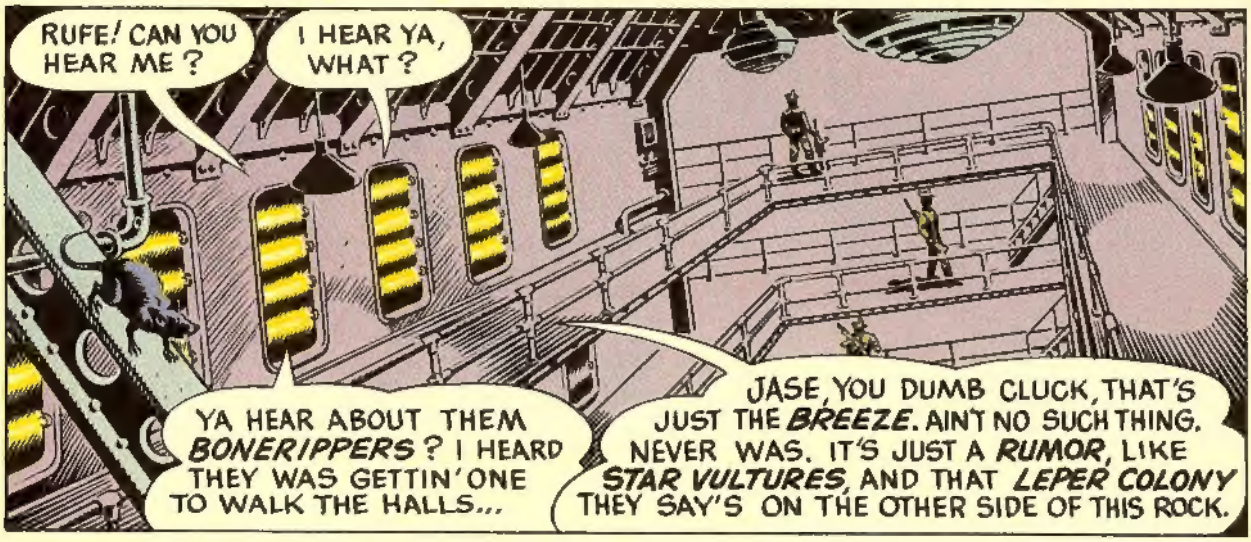
STAFF

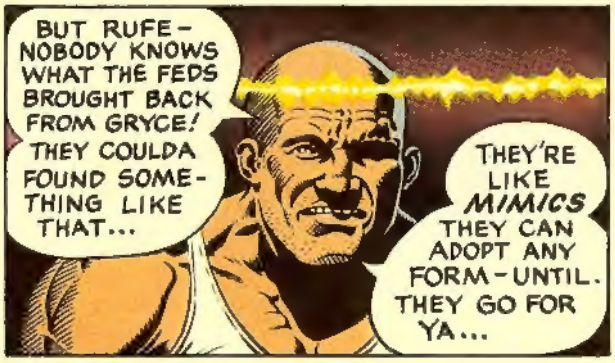
Editor/Publisher . . . . . **Denis Kitchen**
Story Editor . . . . . **Dave Schreiner**
Art Director . . . . . **Peter Poplaski**
Colorist . . . . . **Mike Newhall**
Circulation . . . . . **Holly Brooks**

Death Rattle No. 5, June 1986. Published bi-monthly by Kitchen Sink Press, Inc., No. 2 Swamp Rd., Princeton WI 54968. Cover copyright © 1986 by **Rand Holmes;** "Junkyard Dog" copyright © 1986 by **Mike Baron** and **Rand Holmes;** "Bulto The Cosmic Slug" copyright © 1986 by **Jack Jackson.** Entire contents copyright © 1986 by **Kitchen Sink Press, Inc.** All rights reserved. Price: $2.00 per copy in U.S., $2.80 in Canada. Submissions must be accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope or we will not be responsible for returns. Printed in Canada. `Another Art Carbunkle scan.`

JUNKYARD DOG







STORY: MIKE BARON ART: RAND HOLMES COLORS: MIKE NEWHALL

SAVE IT FOR REC. THERE'S A SCREW COMIN
HOW DO YOU KNOW?
I CAN SMELL'EM

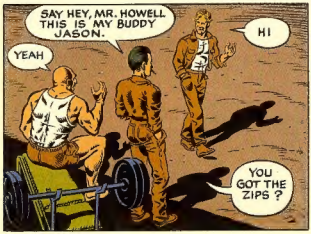
YOU TALKING TO SOMEONE, BOY?
NO SIR, MISTER SCREW, SIR.
YOU JUST KEEP IT UP, RUFE, I CAN SLOW TIME DOWN FOR YOU. SLOW IT WAY, WAY, DOWN.

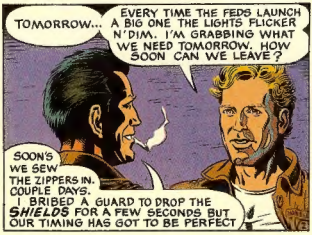
REC: ONE HOUR EACH DAY SPENT IN A COMMUNAL RECREATION AREA
WE'RE MAKING A BREAK
WHEN?
SEE THE FRESH FISH STANDING BY HISSELF? THAT'S HOWELL. HE WORKS IN THE VINYL FURNITURE ROOM.
YEAH, SO?

SO HE'S GOT WHAT WE NEED. SOON'S HE KUIPS THE ZIPPERS WE GOT US A WHEEL.
WE CAN TAKE IT FOR A LITTLE WALK.

UNNH... THEN WHAT?

THE FED POCKET POOL IS 15 KLICKS FROM HERE... I FIGURE WITH TWO OF US WE'LL JUST MAKE IT.
THE FISH?
WE GON' THROW HIM BACK


SAY HEY, MR. HOWELL THIS IS MY BUDDY JASON.
YEAH
HI
YOU GOT THE ZIPS?


TOMORROW...
EVERY TIME THE FEDS LAUNCH A BIG ONE THE LIGHTS FLICKER N'DIM. I'M GRABBING WHAT WE NEED TOMORROW. HOW SOON CAN WE LEAVE?
SOON'S WE SEW THE ZIPPERS IN. COUPLE DAYS.
I BRIBED A GUARD TO DROP THE SHIELDS FOR A FEW SECONDS BUT OUR TIMING HAS GOT TO BE PERFECT

WHAT'S THE RUSH KID? YOU ONLY BEEN HERE A MONTH.
I'M INNOCENT! I WAS FRAMED!
SURE, KID. WE'RE ALL INNOCENT I WAS FRAMED TOO. I NEVER KILLED THOSE LADIES..

AN' THEN I NEVER CHOPPED THE BODIES UP. HA HA HA!
SEE YOU TOMORROW, KID.

THE NEXT 'DAY' THE FEDS LAUNCHED A BIG ONE. DISCHARGE FROM ITS ION THRUSTERS CAUSED THE LIGHTS TO FLICKER AND DIM ALL OVER THE ASTEROID.

NEXT 'DAY': REC YARD
GOT THE STUFF?
I GOT IT. WHEN'S THE BREAK?
TOMORROW, 0900.

FAKE FIRE DRILL. THE CORRIDORS ARE GOING TO BE FILLED WITH SMOKE. FILE OUT, ONLY WHEN YOU COME TO THE MAIN 'EVAC', TURN TOWARD THE GARBAGE ROOM.
THE GARBAGE ROOM?!
THAT'S WHAT I SAID.
THERE'S AN EMERGENCY BLOW VALVE THERE. IT'S OUR TICKET OUT.

THAT NIGHT RUFE WORKED FEVERISHLY TO CONSTRUCT HIS ESCAPE DEVICE - AN AIRTIGHT WHEEL THAT WOULD PERMIT HIM TO TRAVERSE THE SURFACE OF THE ASTEROID.
SSSST RUFE!
I HEAR YA, JASE.

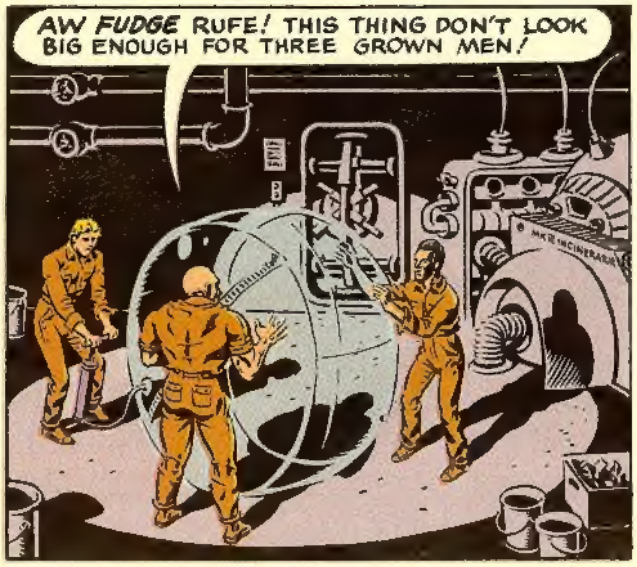
WHAT IF THEY GOT ONE OF THEM BONERIPPERS GUARDIN' THE ROCKET?
SHADDUP, YOU MORON! WORRY ABOUT SOMETHIN' REAL-LIKE WHETHER THESE SEALS WILL HOLD!

0900
EVERY BODY OUT!
AWOOOGAH
AWOOOGAH
SINGLE FILE TOWARD THE MESS HALL!

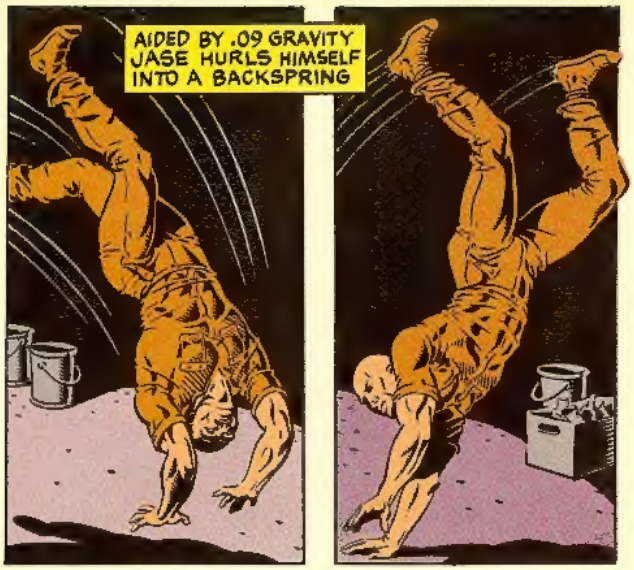
THAT YOU, KID?...
... FOLLOW ME

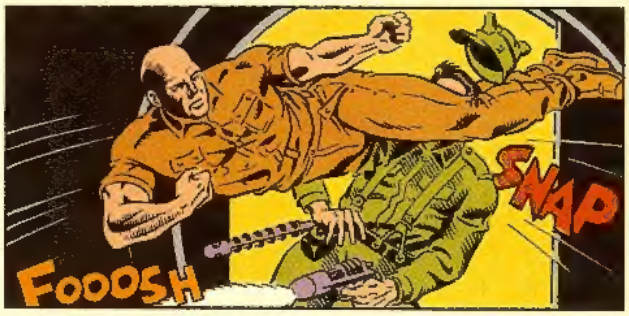
THIS WAY... STEP ON IT.!
LEVEL 2
WASTE
DISPOS
AND
INCINER

THE GARBAGE ROOM
THERE'S THE BLOW VALVE...
..HURRY - HELP ME GET THIS WHEEL INFLATED.

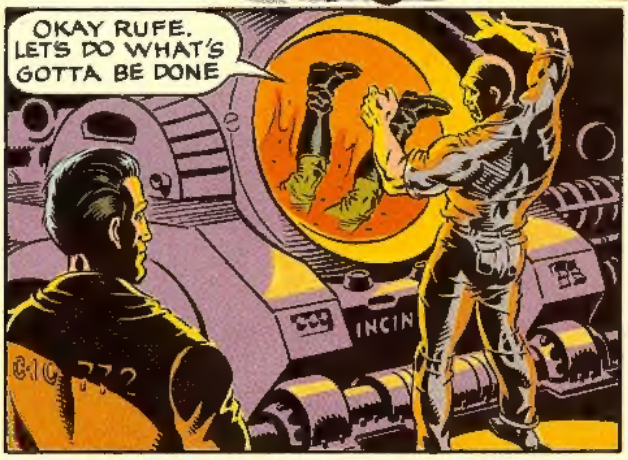

AW FUDGE RUFE! THIS THING DON'T LOOK BIG ENOUGH FOR THREE GROWN MEN!

HOLD IT RIGHT THERE!


AIDED BY .09 GRAVITY JASE HURLS HIMSELF INTO A BACKSPRING


FOOOSH
SNAP

YOU KILLED HIM!
YEAH.
NICE WORK JASE. GIVE ME THE ROD AND STUFF THAT GARBAGE WHERE IT BELONGS...
INCINERATOR


OKAY RUFE. LETS DO WHAT'S GOTTA BE DONE
INCIN

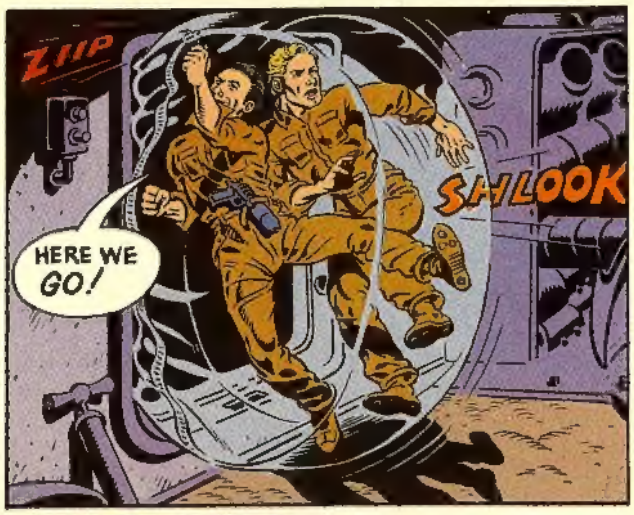
RUFE?
SORRY, JASE, BUT LIKE YOU SAID...

...WHEEL'S ONLY BIG ENOUGH FOR TWO...

...AND YOU'RE JUST TOO DAMN BIG. LET'S GO KID!

NO - I WON'T BE A PARTY TO THIS...
KID - I NEED YOUR MASS TO KEEP THAT THING ON TRACK.
NOW GET YOUR ASS IN IT, OR I'LL FRY YOU LIKE I DID JASON.
HOWELL
C-10772

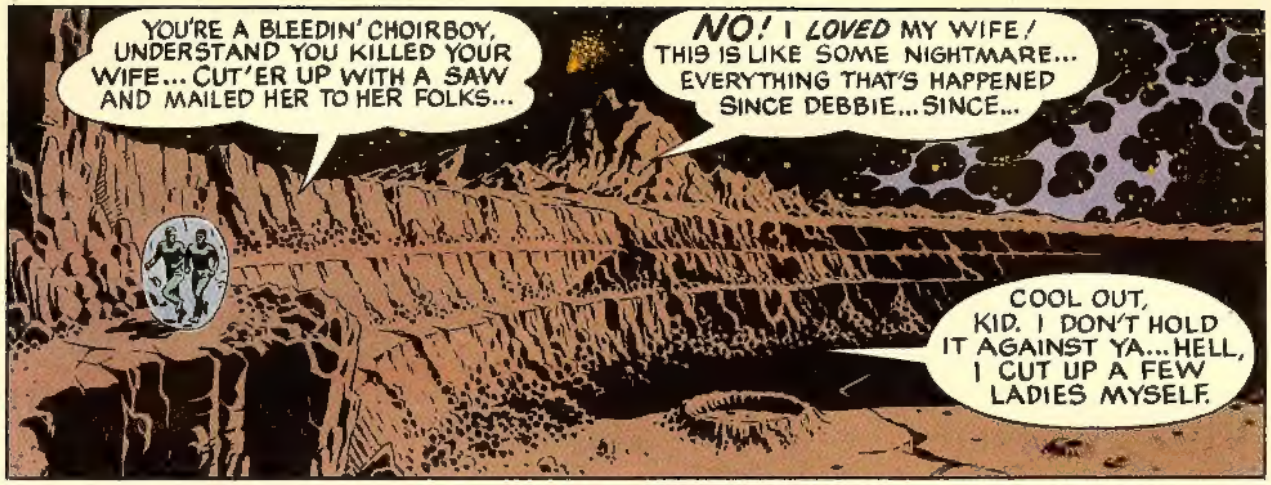
HANG ON I'M BLOWING THE SEAL...


ZIIP
SHLOOK
HERE WE GO!

PUT YR BACK INTO IT! LET'S ROLL THIS BABY OUT OF SIGHT BEFORE ANYONE GETS WISE!

SOON THE PRISON DISAPPEARS OVER THE HORIZON.
WE'LL BEAT THE DEPOT IN AN HOUR. I KNEW A GUY WHO USED TO WORK THERE. HE TOLD ME HOW TO GET INSIDE.
DID YOU KILL HIM TOO?

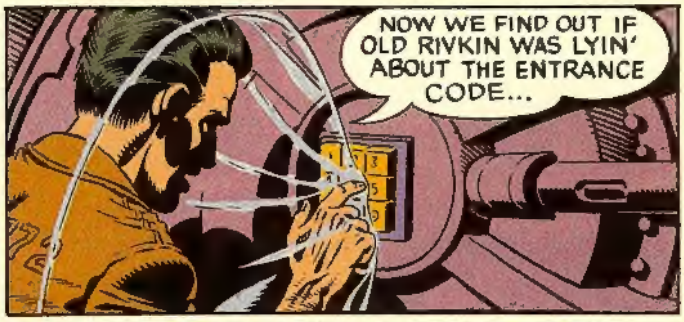
LOOK KID, IF WE'D A LEFT JASE ALIVE, HE'D A SPILLED THE BEANS. THEY GOT DRUGS, Y'KNOW. THIS WAY WE MIGHT JUST PULL IT OFF. AIN'T NO ONE ESCAPED FROM THE COOMBS BEFORE.
I'M NOT LIKE YOU... I'M NOT SUPPOSED TO BE HERE.
SURE KID...


YOU'RE A BLEEDIN' CHOIRBOY, UNDERSTAND YOU KILLED YOUR WIFE... CUT'ER UP WITH A SAW AND MAILED HER TO HER FOLKS...
NO! I LOVED MY WIFE! THIS IS LIKE SOME NIGHTMARE... EVERYTHING THAT'S HAPPENED SINCE DEBBIE... SINCE...
COOL OUT, KID. I DON'T HOLD IT AGAINST YA... HELL, I CUT UP A FEW LADIES MYSELF.

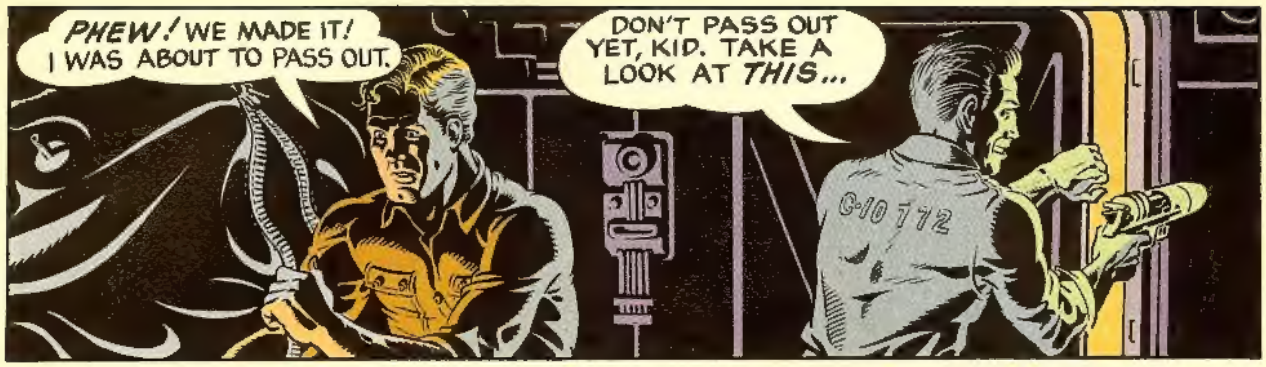
I AM NOT LIKE YOU! I BELIEVE IN LOVE! I AM CAPABLE OF LOVE.
WHAT'S THAT SUPPOSED TA MEAN? I'M CAPABLE OF A LOT OF LOVIN!
WE FIND SOME LADIES I'LL SHOW YA!

LOOK! THE DEPOT! GOOD THING, IT'S GETTING KIND OF STUFFY IN HERE.
HOW CAN WE BREAK IN? DON'T THEY HAVE SECURITY?
SURE THEY GOT SECURITY.

THEY PUT THE DEPOT HERE CAUSE THIS CHUNK OF ROCK IS AT THE ASS END OF NOWHERE, KID. LAST THING THEY EXPECT IS FOR A COUPLE OF SPORTS LIKE US TO COME WALKIN' UP...


NOW WE FIND OUT IF OLD RIVKIN WAS LYIN' ABOUT THE ENTRANCE CODE...

WE'RE IN LUCK KID... LET'S WALK IT IN...


PHEW! WE MADE IT! I WAS ABOUT TO PASS OUT.
DON'T PASS OUT YET, KID. TAKE A LOOK AT THIS...
C-10 772

A CHICK WATCHMAN! THIS IS GOING TO BE MORE FUN THAN I THOUGHT...

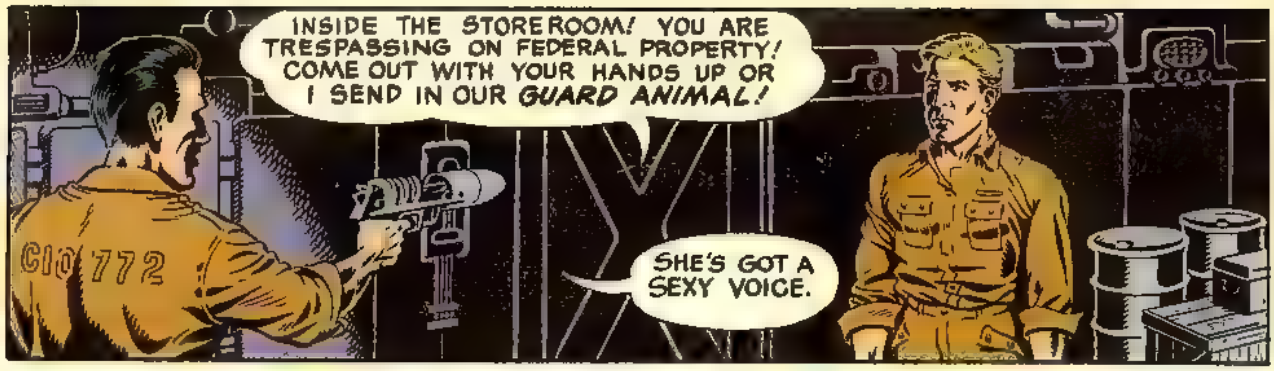
NO.
CLICK
KID, YOU AIN'T TOO BRIGHT. BUT THAT'S ALL RIGHT...

CLICK
HUH?

YOU SERVED YOUR PURPOSE...
C10 772

PUNJI!

YOU STUPID..! NOW SHE KNOWS WE'RE HERE. SHE'S CALLIN' SOME KIND OF WATCH DOG. AND YOU'RE GOING TO GREET IT, KID.
C10 772


INSIDE THE STOREROOM! YOU ARE TRESPASSING ON FEDERAL PROPERTY! COME OUT WITH YOUR HANDS UP OR I SEND IN OUR GUARD ANIMAL!
SHE'S GOT A SEXY VOICE.
CIO 772

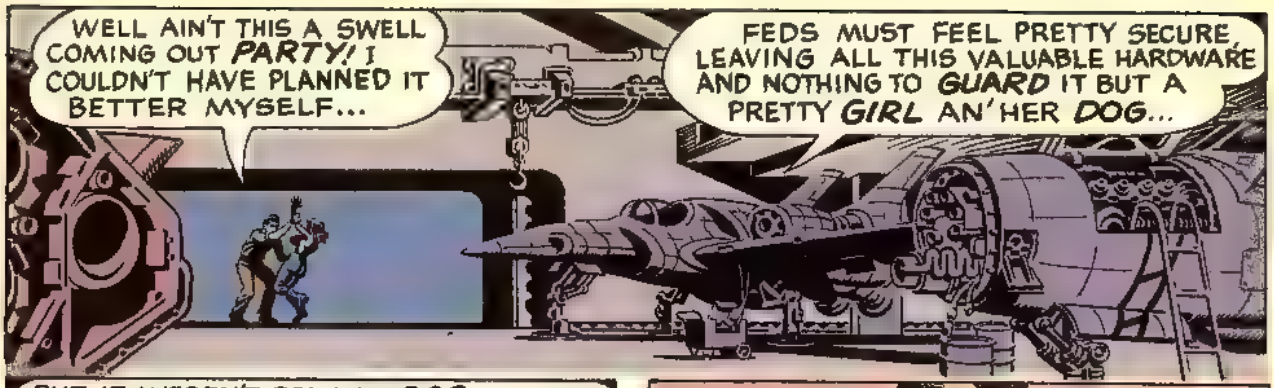
SEND IT IN, LADY! I AIN'T AFRAID OF NO GUARD DOG.

DOG GETS YOU, I GET THE DOG, THEN I GET THE GIRL.
SHE DIDN'T SAY IT WAS A DOG.

JESUS! JASON WAS RIGHT! NOT THIS WAY, YOU DUMB ANIMAL!
ZAT
GROWL

THAT'S IT FIDO! EAT 'EM UP! SO LONG, LOVERBOY.
YAAAH!!
CHOMP

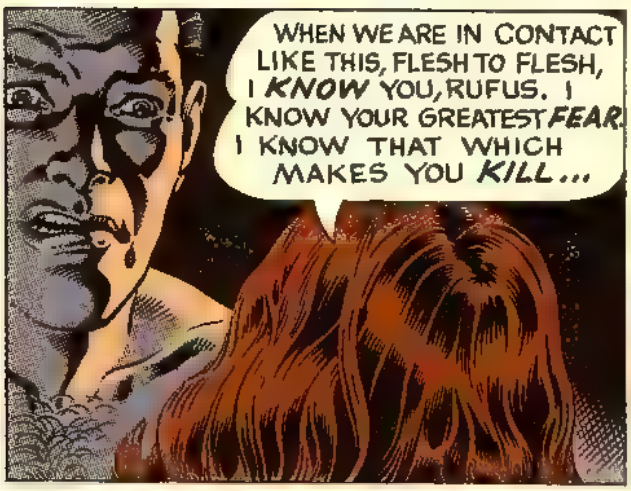
I HATE TO CUT YOUR MEAL SHORT, BUT I CAN'T HAVE YOU RUNNING AROUND LOOKING FOR DESSERT.
VIPE
ZAT
CHARGE SET AT MAXIMUM... HEH HEH
SHIT!... OUT OF CHARGE. OH WELL...
ZAT
FIZZLE
...THINGS HAVE A WAY OF WORKING OUT, WHEN YOU'RE A GOOD PERSON.
COME OUT OR I'LL SHOOT.
CATCH THIS, BITCH.
RUFE, YOU OL'DEVIL, YOU'VE STILL GOT IT!
CLONK
OH...

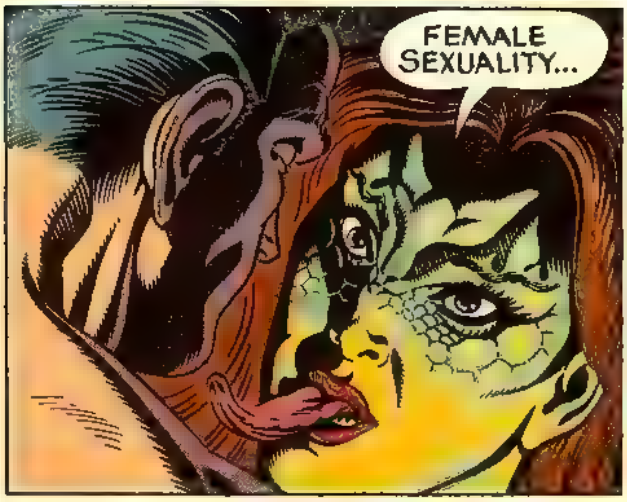

WELL AIN'T THIS A SWELL COMING OUT PARTY! I COULDN'T HAVE PLANNED IT BETTER MYSELF...
FEDS MUST FEEL PRETTY SECURE, LEAVING ALL THIS VALUABLE HARDWARE AND NOTHING TO GUARD IT BUT A PRETTY GIRL AN' HER DOG...

BUT IT WEREN'T REALLY A DOG - IT WAS ONE OF THOSE BONESHREDDERS, WASN'T IT? FROM GRYCE, WASN'T IT?
NO...
RIP

THE ANIMAL WAS NOT FROM GRYCE...

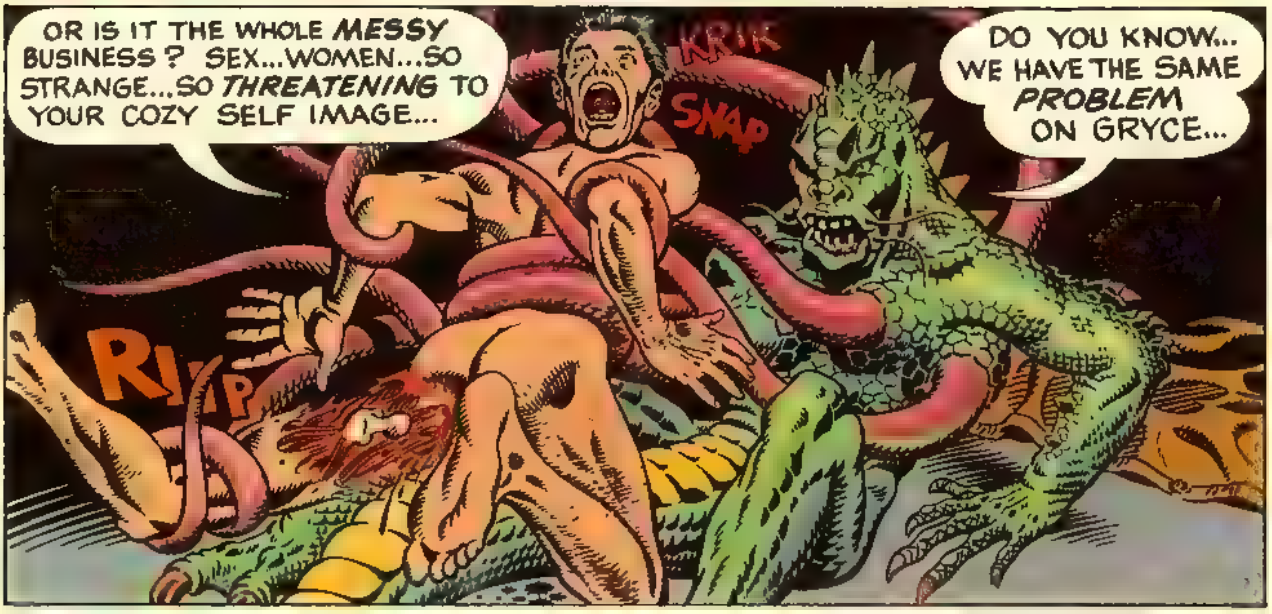
I AM...

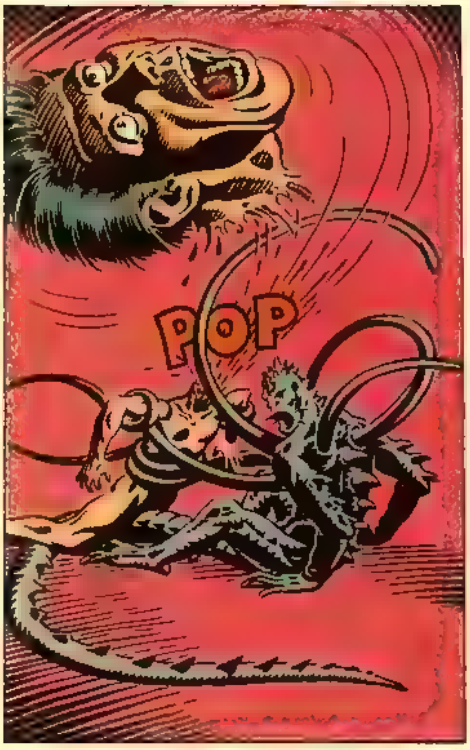

WHEN WE ARE IN CONTACT LIKE THIS, FLESH TO FLESH, I KNOW YOU, RUFUS. I KNOW YOUR GREATEST FEAR. I KNOW THAT WHICH MAKES YOU KILL...

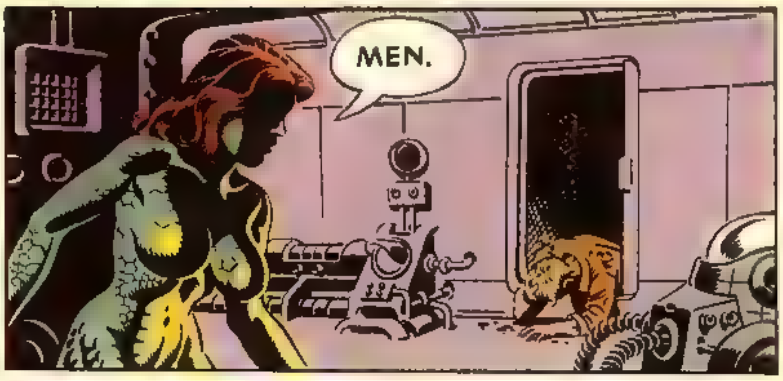

FEMALE SEXUALITY...

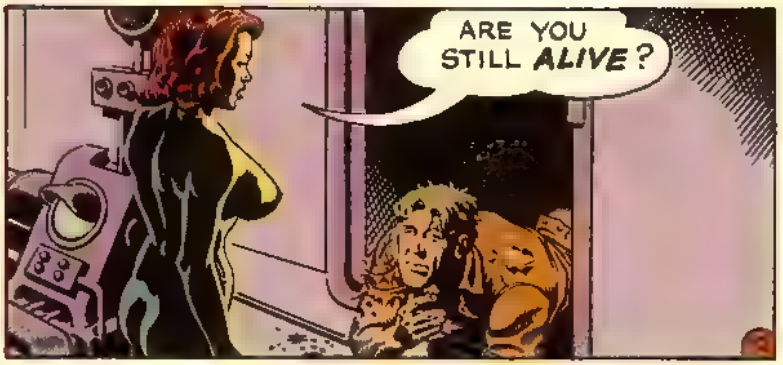
AH...AH... ARGH!
LET ME GIVE SUBSTANCE TO YOUR FEAR RUFUS.
LET ME TEACH YOU WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A VICTIM...

EEEYAAAH
IS THIS WHAT YOU FEAR? TEETH IN THE VAGINA?


OR IS IT THE WHOLE MESSY BUSINESS? SEX...WOMEN...SO STRANGE...SO THREATENING TO YOUR COZY SELF IMAGE...
KRUK
SNAP
DO YOU KNOW... WE HAVE THE SAME PROBLEM ON GRYCE...
RIP

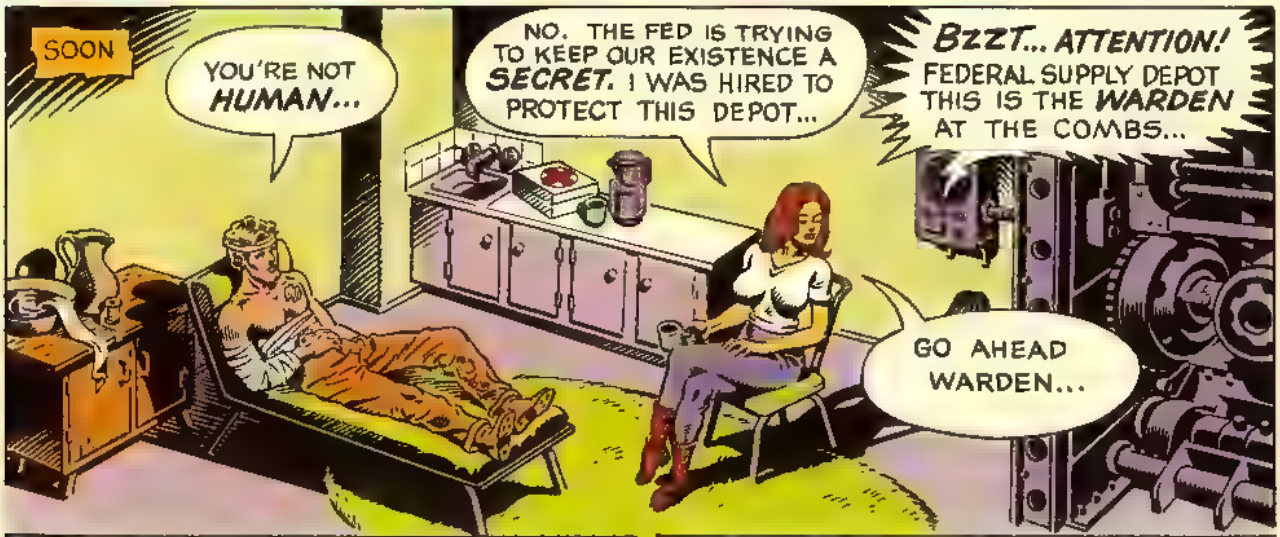

POP


MEN.

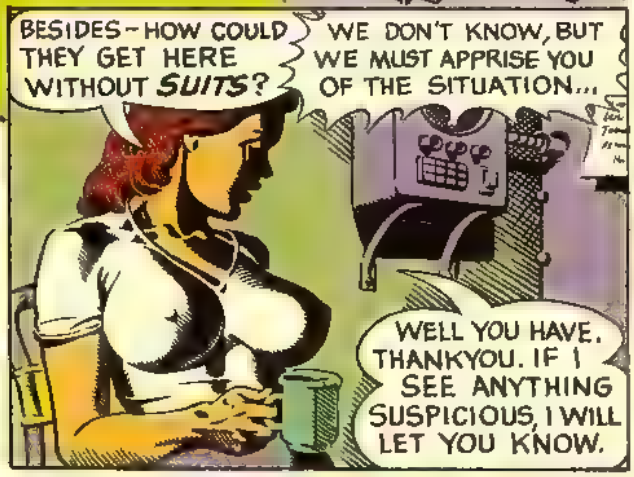

ARE YOU STILL ALIVE?

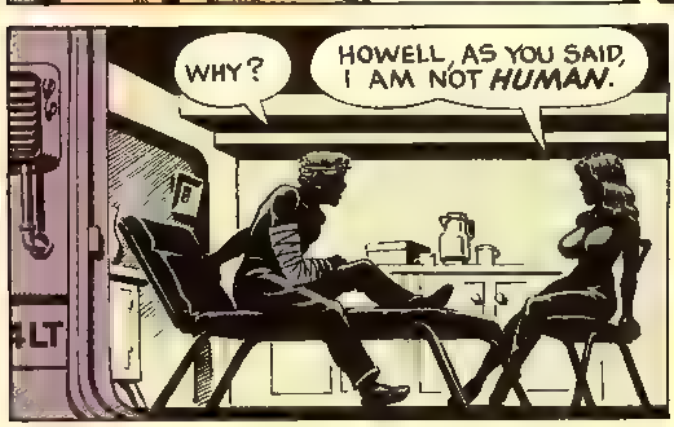
I...
DON'T SPEAK. I AM A TELEPATH... I WILL KNOW YOU ON MY OWN TERMS.

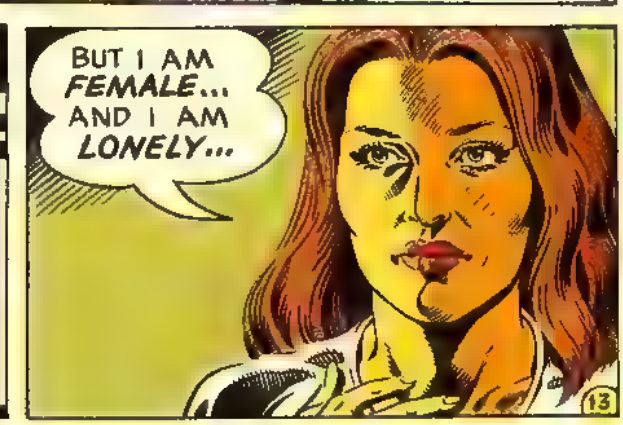
YOU DO NOT BELONG HERE...YOU COMMITTED NO CRIMES... YOUR SYSTEM HAS FAILED YOU.
WAIT. I WILL TEND YOUR WOUNDS.

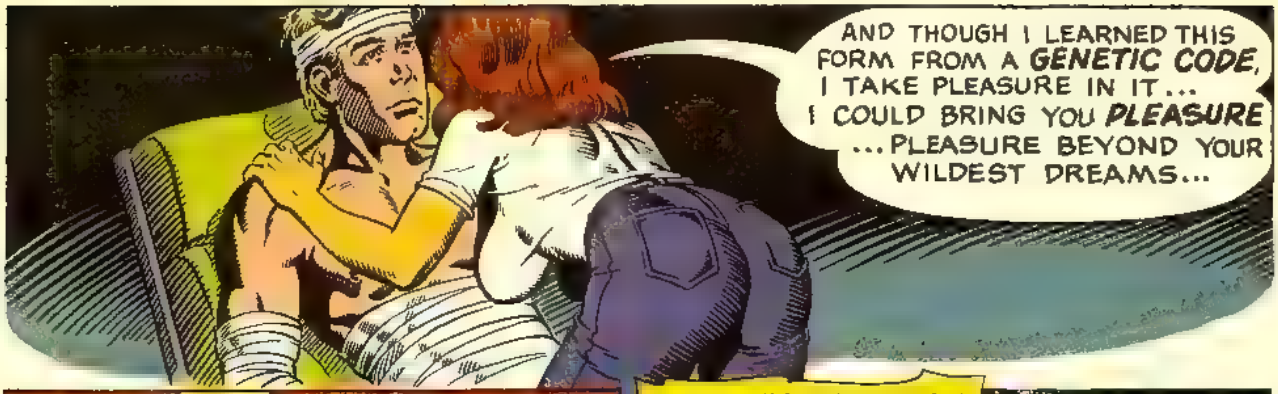

SOON
YOU'RE NOT HUMAN...
NO. THE FED IS TRYING TO KEEP OUR EXISTENCE A SECRET. I WAS HIRED TO PROTECT THIS DEPOT...
BZZT... ATTENTION! FEDERAL SUPPLY DEPOT THIS IS THE WARDEN AT THE COMBS...
GO AHEAD WARDEN...

WE HAVE AN ESCAPE-TWO CONVICTS-THEY ARE ARMED AND DANGEROUS...
THANKYOU, WARDEN, BUT WE ARE SECURE HERE.

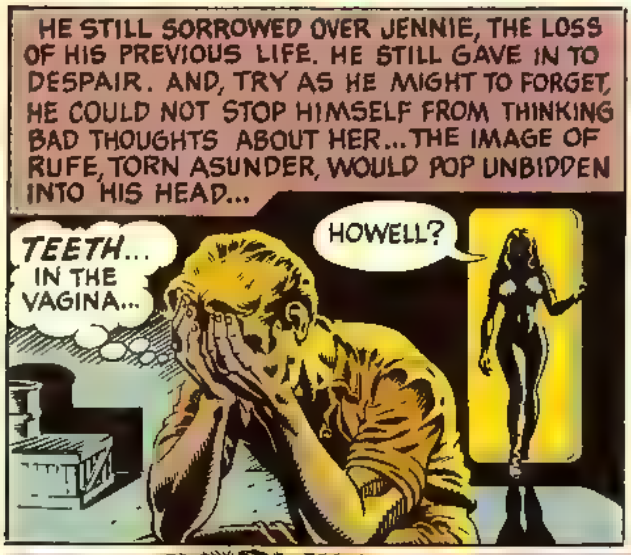

BESIDES-HOW COULD THEY GET HERE WITHOUT SUITS?
WE DON'T KNOW, BUT WE MUST APPRISE YOU OF THE SITUATION...
WELL YOU HAVE. THANKYOU. IF I SEE ANYTHING SUSPICIOUS, I WILL LET YOU KNOW.

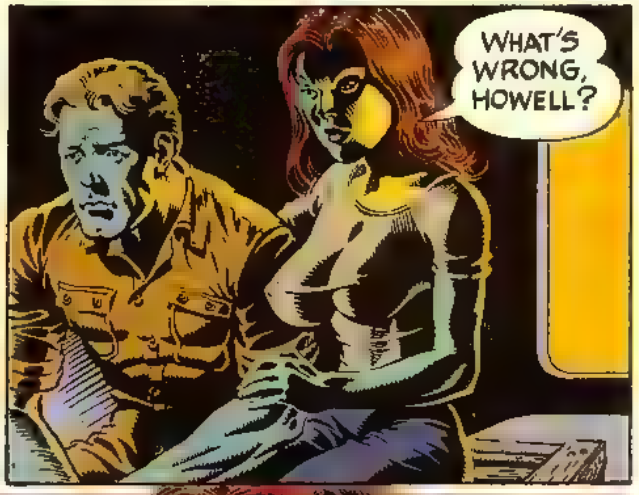

WHY?
HOWELL, AS YOU SAID, I AM NOT HUMAN.


BUT I AM FEMALE... AND I AM LONELY...


AND THOUGH I LEARNED THIS FORM FROM A GENETIC CODE, I TAKE PLEASURE IN IT... I COULD BRING YOU PLEASURE ...PLEASURE BEYOND YOUR WILDEST DREAMS...

HOWELL TOOK UP WITH THE GUARD LADY. HE CALLED HER GI-GI AND LIFE WAS SWEETER THAN HE HAD ANY RIGHT TO EXPECT.


HE STILL SORROWED OVER JENNIE, THE LOSS OF HIS PREVIOUS LIFE. HE STILL GAVE IN TO DESPAIR. AND, TRY AS HE MIGHT TO FORGET, HE COULD NOT STOP HIMSELF FROM THINKING BAD THOUGHTS ABOUT HER...THE IMAGE OF RUFE, TORN ASUNDER, WOULD POP UNBIDDEN INTO HIS HEAD...
TEETH... IN THE VAGINA...
HOWELL?


WHAT'S WRONG, HOWELL?

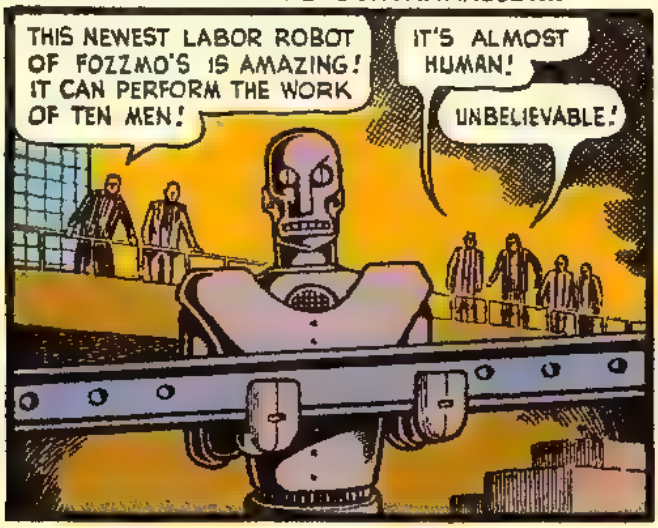
FINIS

ROBOT WOMAN

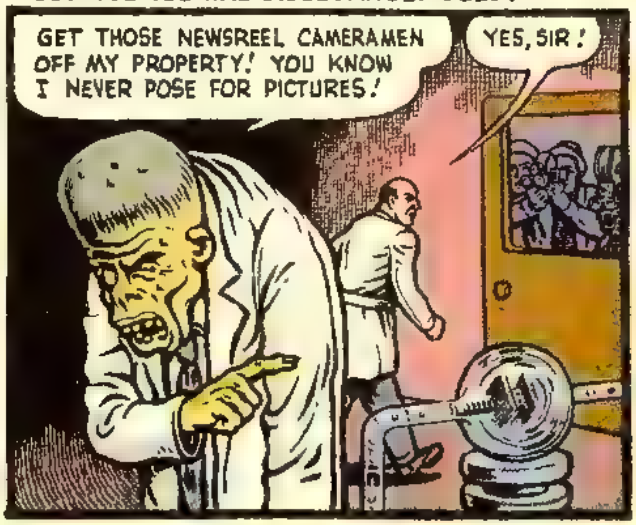
THOUGH SHE WAS FORMED OF METAL AND PLASTIC, HER CREATOR CLAIMED SHE WAS THE PERFECT WOMAN!

BUT,-- LIKE ANY OTHER MACHINE, SHE HAD HER FAILINGS!

YOU, **FOZZMO**, ARE THE MOST BRILLIANT SCIENTIST AND INVENTOR OF THE CENTURY! THE WHOLE WORLD HAS ACCLAIMED YOUR GENIUS AT CREATING AMAZING MECHANICAL CONTRIVANCES!...



BUT THOUGH THE PRODUCTS OF YOUR MIGHTY MIND ARE HELD IN UNIVERSAL ESTEEM, YOU STRIVE TO PERSONALLY KEEP OUT OF THE PUBLIC EYE--- *BECAUSE YOU ARE DISGUSTINGLY* ***UGLY!***



YES,--YOU'VE SEEN PEOPLE SHUDDER AT SIGHT OF YOUR DISTORTED FACE!

LOOK! THERE GOES THE FAMOUS FOZZMO!

YOU-YOU MEAN THAT THING IS THE BRILLIANT INVENTOR?

WITHOUT A MATE, YOUR LIFE IS EMPTY---

I'D TRADE MY ABILITY FOR A WOMAN WHO COULD LOOK AT ME WITHOUT DISGUST!

SOMEWHERE THERE MUST BE ONE WHO COULD CARE FOR ME!

NO! IT'S HOPELESS! I'M DOOMED TO CONTINUE LIKE THIS,--RESPECTED FOR MY SCIENTIFIC ACCOMPLISHMENT,--BUT LOATHED BECAUSE OF MY APPEARANCE!

IN THE MOMENT OF DEEPEST DEJECTION, AN IDEA IS BORN!..

WHY DIDN'T I THINK OF IT BEFORE? EVEN IF I BECOME A PAUPER IN THE PROCESS--I'LL DO IT!

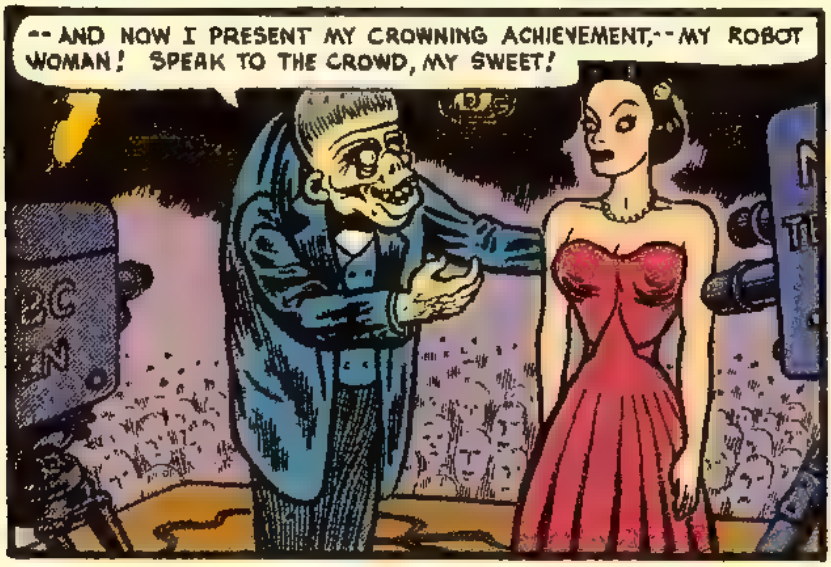
WHILE WEEKS SPEED BY, YOU THROW YOURSELF COMPLETELY INTO THE TASK, CONCENTRATING YOUR ENERGIES, FACULTIES AND MONEY ON ONE DESIRED GOAL!

THE NEXT FEW DAYS SHOULD BRING SUCCESS--OR FAILURE!

---AND THEN!--

I'VE DONE IT! I'VE CREATED A WOMAN OF MY OWN!

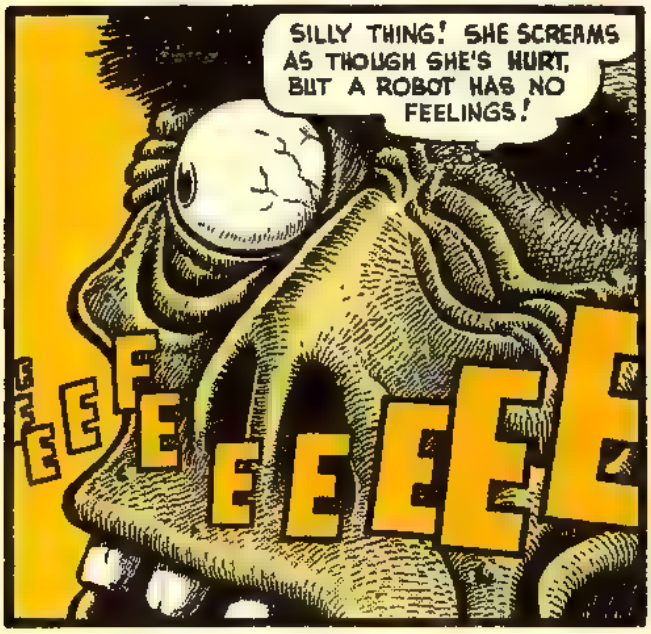
SO, FOZZMO, YOU PUT THE FINAL TOUCH TO YOUR ROBOT WOMAN! PRIDE EVEN STIRS YOU TO MAKE A PUBLIC APPEARANCE WITH HER!



IN THE DAYS THAT FOLLOW, YOU ENJOY THE CONSTANT DEVOTION OF YOUR CREATION...

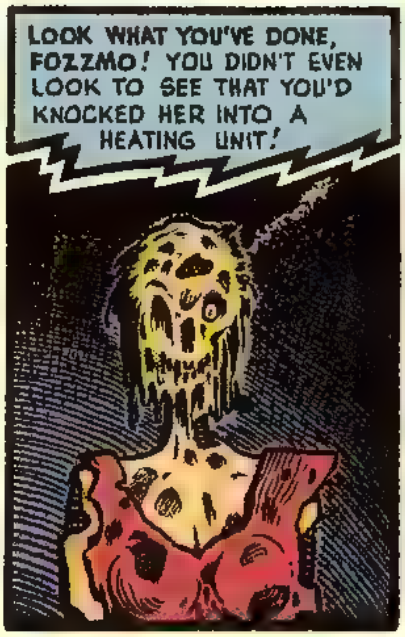
BUT THERE IS SUCH A THING AS TOO MUCH DEVOTION! EVENTUALLY YOU BECOME IRRITATED BY IT---

-- AND THEN EXASPERATED AND CRUEL!...



A LITTLE WHILE LATER YOU NEED HER.....

SHE ENTERS THE LAB, AND--



YOU STAGGER BACK, AND CRASH INTO SOME BOTTLES!

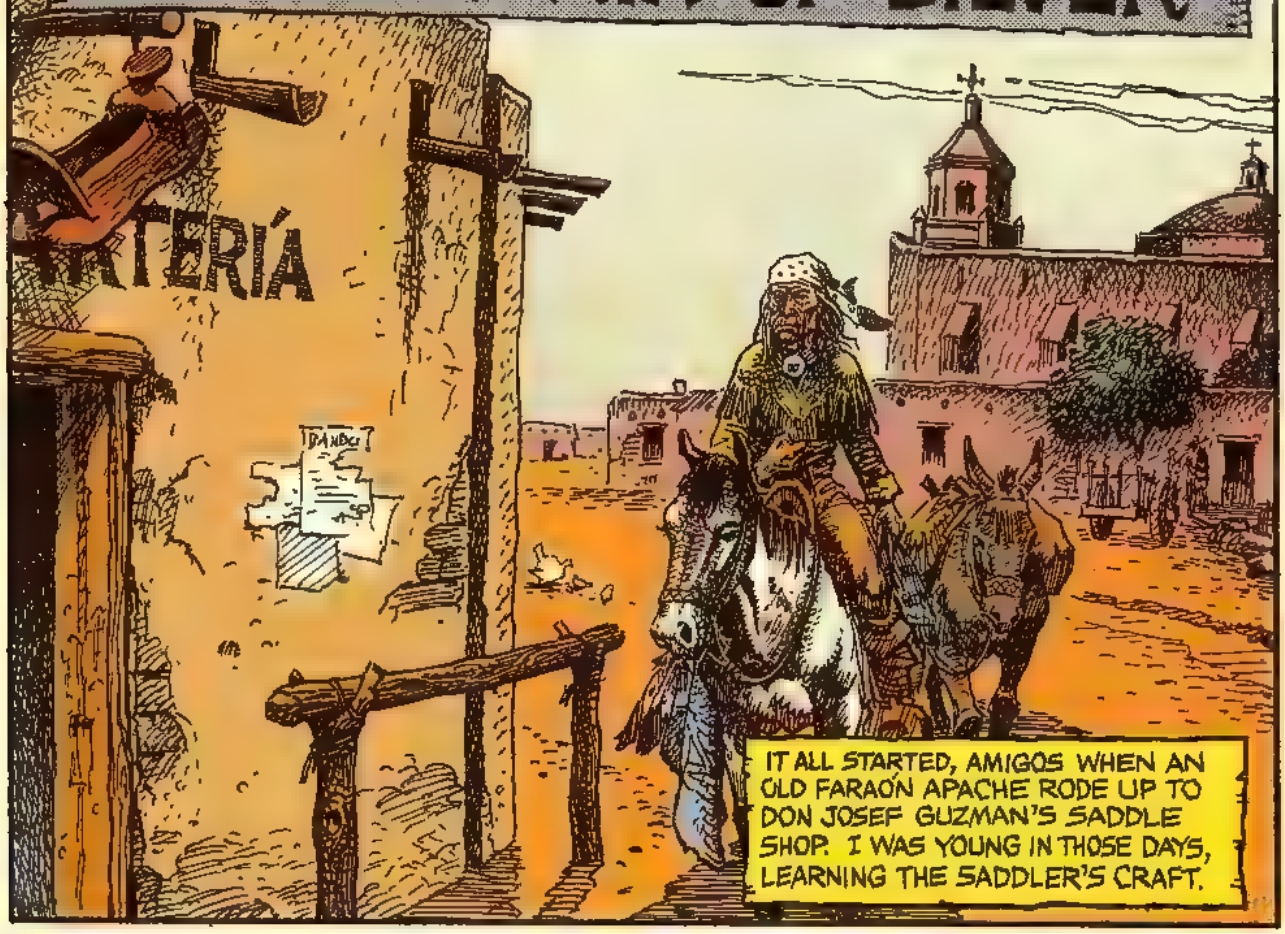
DEATH COMES SWIFTLY AS POWERFUL ACIDS BURN INTO YOU!

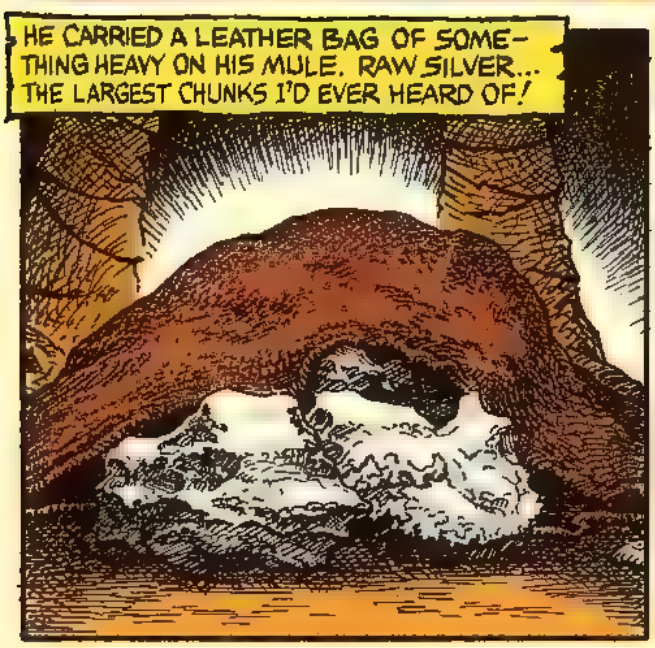
BECAUSE OF YOUR DESIRE FOR SECLUSION, DAYS PASS BEFORE ANY ONE SUSPECTS SOMETHING IS WRONG! THEN A BURGLAR BREAKS INTO THE BUILDING!

THE END

Bulto...

"A MOUNTAIN OF SILVER"





OF COURSE THE APACHE WOULDN'T SAY

CONCHOS! LIKE THE SPANISH USE— BIG ONES! I PAY...

SO DON JOSEF FASHIONED AT LEAST SIXTY DISCS FROM THE PRECIOUS METAL, EACH AS BIG AS A TORTILLA. COCHATA WAS PLEASED

MAKE MORE! ALL DIFFERENT SIZES! MUCHO!

THE OLD INDIAN BECAME A REGULAR FIXTURE AROUND THE SHOP, ALWAYS BRINGING MORE SILVER AND WANTING MORE CONCHOS ..

TILL NEXT TIME, TACU

HELL, HE MUST BE SUPPLYING THE WHOLE TRIBE!

WITH EACH NEW LOAD, DON JOSEF BECAME CONVINCED THAT THIS PLATA CAME FROM THE RICHEST MINE IN ALL NUEVA ESPAÑA

NEVER SEEN IT SO PURE

PUT DESIGNS, EH TACU? LIKE THESE!

NATURALLY THE PATRON WAS ALWAYS AFTER THE INDIAN TO TELL HIM WHERE HE GOT THE STUFF.

UP THERE, TACU FROM THE STARS!

MORE BULLSHIT

AFTER ABOUT A YEAR OF NAGGING, ONE DAY GUZMAN CAUGHT THE OLD FARAÓN IN A GOOD MOOD...

SO YOU WANT GO TO LA MONTAÑA DE PLATA - TO SILVER MOUNTAIN, EH TACU?

!!

HE ALWAYS CALLED DON JOSEF "TACU" WHICH MEANT "SHORTY" IN APACHE.

WELL, I TAKE YOU— BUT MUST PROMISE ME KEEP IT A SECRET!

TALABARTERÍA

OF COURSE THE BOSS EAGERLY AGREED. HE SWORE ON THE CROSS THAT HE WOULD NEVER TELL A SOUL.

LET THE BOY COME TOO. I LIKE HIM... SWEAR BOY!!

KISS KISS

WE LOCKED THE PLACE UP, AND HEADED NORTH THAT AFTERNOON — JUST THE THREE OF US.

MUCHO PLATA, ...YOU SEE!

ONCE OUT IN THE MONTE, IT SOON BECAME EVIDENT THAT OTHERS KNEW OF OUR COMING.

IF MY PEOPLE FIND OUT ABOUT THIS, OLD COCHATA A DEAD MAN! WE ALL BE DEAD MANS!!

DEEPER AND DEEPER WE WENT INTO APACHERIA. I THINK DON JOSEF WAS BEGINNING TO WORRY.

FINALLY, AFTER THREE DAYS WE REACHED THE ARROYO SAN MIGUEL

TOMORROW I SHOW EL CERRO DEL ALMAGRE!!

WE WORKED OUR WAY UP A CANYON ON FOOT...

UNTIL WE REACHED THE MOUTH OF A CAVE, CONCEALED WITH ROCKS AND BRUSH

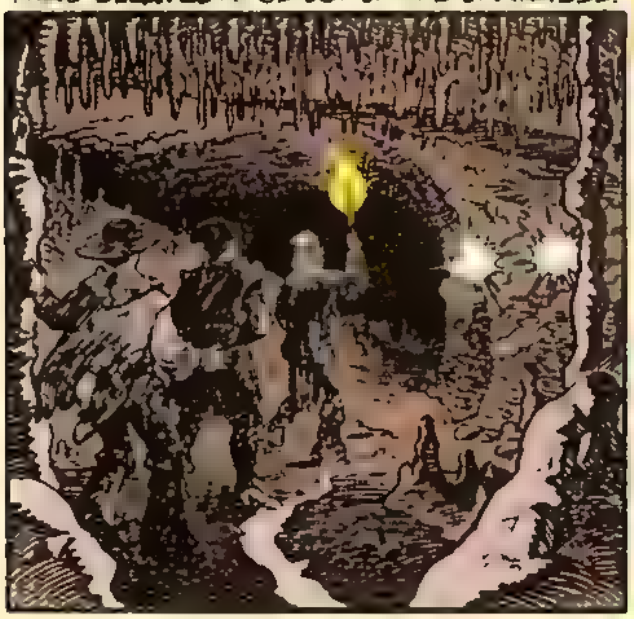
BEFORE ENTERING OLD COCHATA CAST A NERVOUS LOOK BEHIND HIM.

CENTURIES OF BAT GUANO COVERED THE DANK CAVERN FLOOR AND THE ODOR WAS FRIGHTFUL.

WATCH WHERE STEP, AMIGOS

A DEAFENING MULTITUDE OF FRENZIED WINGS ALMOST EXTINGUISHED OUR TORCH.

WE HADN'T GONE TWENTY PACES WHEN SOMETHING **GLEAMED** AT US OUT OF THE DARKNESS.



HE GRABBED THE TORCH AND SLOSHED THROUGH THE WATER AND BAT SHIT, UTTERING CRIES OF DELIGHT FAR BACK INTO THE CAVE

SAN LUIS POTOSI! ZACATECAS - I'VE SEEN THEM ALL, BUT NOTHING LIKE THIS! NOTHING!!

SLURSH!

OLD COCHATA JUST SMILED

NOW YOU SEE WHY I SHOW YOU... PLENTY FOR INDIAN AND SPANISH BOTH.. MUCHO PLATA! BUT REMEMBER WHAT YOU PROMISE!

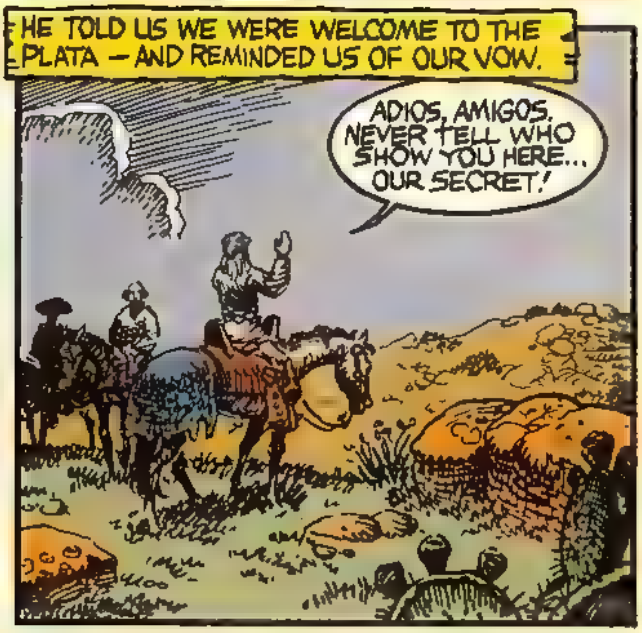
YES YES. WE'LL REMEMBER! **DIEGO**, DON'T JUST STAND THERE — **USE YOUR HEAD**, BOY...

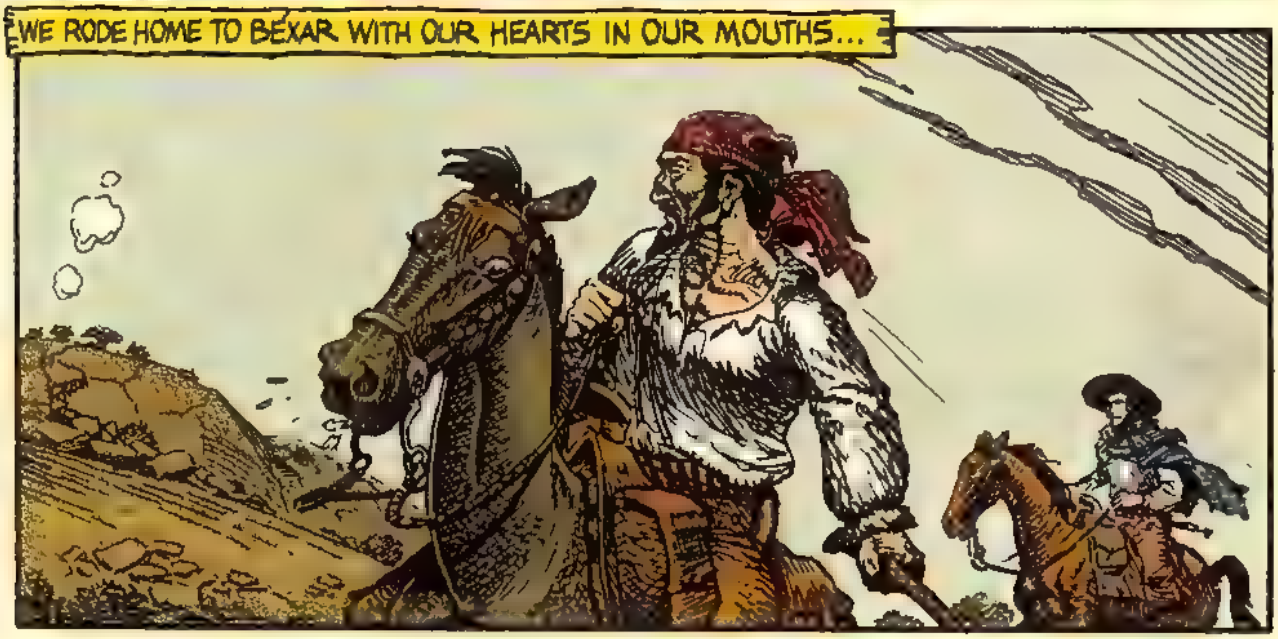
SO WE TOOK OUR TOMAHAWKS AND HACKED AT THE SOFT, REDDISH-COATED METAL, DISLODGING HUGE CHUNKS.

MY PATRON'S EYES WERE TOO BIG.
GRUNT

HIS COAT RIPPED ITS SEAMS AND HE ONLY GOT HALF OF WHAT I CARRIED OUT OF EL CERRO THAT DAY.
HURRY, TACU...
@★!!

OUR BENEFACTOR LEFT US TO RETURN ALONE.
TOO DANGEROUS FOR ME TO GO WITH YOU AND SILVER. IF CATCH, OUR SHAMAN NOT LIKE!


HE TOLD US WE WERE WELCOME TO THE PLATA – AND REMINDED US OF OUR VOW.
ADIOS, AMIGOS. NEVER TELL WHO SHOW YOU HERE... OUR SECRET!


WE RODE HOME TO BÉXAR WITH OUR HEARTS IN OUR MOUTHS...

TWICE WE WERE ALMOST CAUGHT BY FARAÓN WARRIORS, SCOUTING THEIR VAST DOMAIN.

BUT GUZMAN WAS UN HOMBRE DEL CAMPO... THE BEST FRONTIERSMAN IN ALL TEXAS!

WE MADE IT BACK SAFE TO THE SADDLE SHOP AND SAT LOOKING AT OUR PILE OF RAW SILVER.

DIEGO MY BOY, WE'RE RICH! HEHEHE...

jaxon · story + art graham ward · letters

TO BE CONTINUED...

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This bi-monthly $1.95 comic features tales of the eerie, the unexpected, the out of the ordinary. With artists like Rand Holmes, Jack (Jaxon) Jackson, Will Eisner, Charles Burns, Steve Bissette, and writers like Mike Baron and Jan Strnad, this anthology title features the best contemporary professionals working today.

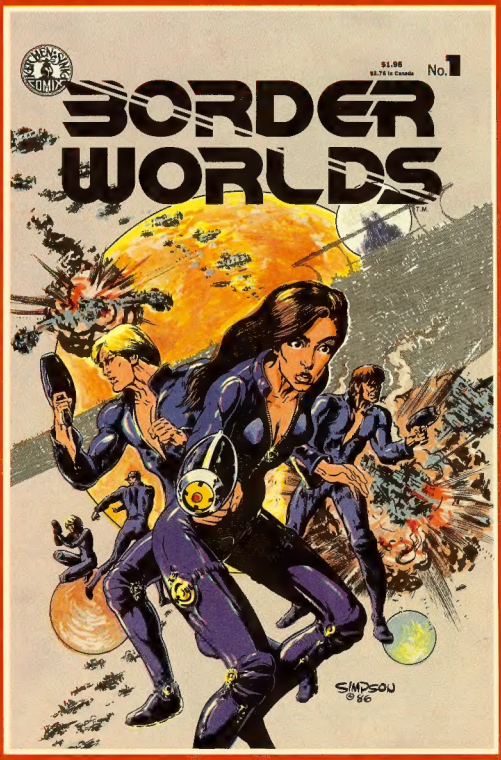
AND MUCH MORE

This is NOT the full lineup for 1986. We have many more projects in mind for this year, including books by master cartoonists, collections of classic strips, and work by contemporary talents. We're working to produce a solid, all-around package—watch our monthly PIPELINE for details.

WHERE QUALITY COUNTS!

In July, outer space explodes...

...and Earth will never be the same!



Donald Simpson's BORDER WORLDS No. 1

From Kitchen Sink Press. The first issue of Donald Simpson's new science fiction title will be on the stands in JULY. Prepare for bi-monthly lift off.

GREAT PLEASURE

Having been a long time fan of horror and science fiction comics, it was with pleasure and anticipation that I purchased your first issue. I was surprised—it was better than I had hoped it would be. Issue 2 proved that the horrors of the real world are often stranger than what can be made up.

My opinion is that a good idea for a comic starts off as a good book in No. 1. Your good idea is becoming a great book.

HAMBLIN PHILLIPS
PO 53 Braddock Heights MD 20714

KEEP ON RATTLING

Thought I'd send you an encouraging word about the re-emergence of *Death Rattle* from the grave, and comment on the letter printed in No. 3 from the guy who felt the wrath of one of my numerous Death Squad Commandos.

Actually, I'm sorry that **F.J. Hannon** was rattled by a phone call ostensibly made in my defense (although my first impulse is to say something like, "He who takes Lou's name in vain deserves what he gets"). Needless to say, I had nothing to do with it personally, didn't order one of my gunsels to do it, and regret that it spoiled what must've otherwise been a fine day for Mr./Ms. Hannon. All that polite shit out of the way, I must admit that reading about it cracked me up...

I want to wish you luck with *Death Rattle*—I'm always pleased to see half-way decent anthology books arrive on the scene. There ain't many left, (and I figure the new *Heavy Metal* quarterly is doomed), especially ones that aren't afraid to publish work by anyone outside comic fandom's favorites. What a dismal lot most of those guys are. I like that you're running long stories, and not trying to jam in as many short things as you can, or slice longer things up into endless serials. I *hate* continued stories, and I notice you've instituted one with the third issue (naughty, naughty).

My criticisms have mostly to do with your covers, which I think have been second rate (don't much like **Doug Hansen's** work—seems clumsy and compositionally unbalanced to me), and the writing of the strips, which hasn't been as sharp as it could have been (excepting **Jaxon,** who's in a class by himself). I was pleased to see the **Steve Stiles** strip—Uncle Steve has always been one of my favorites, though, as I've told him on several occasions, I'd much rather see his idiosyncratic "underground" style (like the stuff in your *Hyper* collection) than his EC-pastiche style. Lotsa guys can do that, but only Steve can do Steve.

Whining aside, I do hope *Death Rattle* croaks on for many more issues, adding variety to an increasingly monotonal chorus of derivative backwork. Comics needs all the mavericks it can get.

LOU STATHIS
PO Box 1188, Cathedral Station, NY NY 10025

Thanks for the encouragement, Lou. The de facto run-in with F.J. Hannon that Mr. Stathis refers to occurred when the latter was a writer and editor of HEAVY METAL.

LOTS OF POTENTIAL

Death Rattle 3 wasn't quite as good as the first two, but it was still much better than *Tales of Terror,* which to me is nothing more than DC "horror" stories plus sex and violence. Your policy of longer stories is much appreciated—in fact, I'd like to see a whole issue devoted to one story every now and then. **Jaxon's** "Bulto...The Cosmic Slug" would be much better served if it was presented as a whole story rather than a multi-parter. The title doesn't quite fit the seriousness of the mood, either.

"Mind Siege" [by **Steve Stiles**] had the air of a certain type of story found in late '60s to early '70s fanzines. I'm kind of tired of post-nuclear holocaust stories by now, but some of the panels depicting the hallucinations saved it. The ending, however, was a little cliched.

"A Dead Man's Chest" didn't do much for me. I pretty much knew the end halfway through the story. But this book has a lot of potential, and I hope it stays around a lot longer than the first run did.

JAMES LINDBLOOM
133 College av, Poughkeepsie NY 12603

ONE COMPLAINT

I have but one complaint with issue two of *Death Rattle.* Two of the three stories do not fit under either horror or science fiction.

"God's Bosom" and "And Here He Is...The Artist Himself" may indeed horrify people, but that does not make them horror stories. I do not think they are science fiction by any stretch of the imagination.

Why do you run these types of stories in this comic?

PATRICK STEVENS
Kansas City MO

Well, Patrick, what DOES make a horror story? "God's Bosom", in our opinion, is one of the most intense horror stories we've ever read. The story is closely based on fact, it is not a fiction, and that's a major part of what makes it truly horrifying. Horror is supposed to evoke strong feelings of dread and terror; a horror story takes those elements and adds the guilty pleasure of fascination. From a distance, we want to see what happens to the characters, AND we want to be left with a sense of wonder about a world foreign to us. In a horror story, part of that sense of wonder entails "thrills" and a certain queasiness about how those "thrills" are depicted. "God's Bosom" examines the clash of two cultures under an unsparing microscope. The representatives of one culture undergo a violent and HORRIBLE transformation—the veneer of civilization is stripped from them, and then they are harassed until they die. The one survivor goes insane and remains that way to the end of his days. This is real horror, rendered artistically and uncompromisingly by Jaxon. The fascination is there, and so is the dread. As for Rand Holmes piece, we grant you that it isn't horror and it isn't science fiction. It's a fantasy that uses some of the elements of horror in a humorous fashion. We ran it because it was out of the ordinary—it is not the same old common generic horror comic stuff ground out like sausage—and it was rendered exquisitely.

HOPES FOR BETTER

The best piece in issue three is "Bulto," which seems to be a more mystical working of the story presented in **Jaxon's** own book.

"Mind Siege" leaves a great deal for the reader to decide at the end of the story, but does not have enough created material in front to leave the reader feeling satisfied. It read rather like part of a movie, mainly the middle and possibly the end, without providing the beginning of the story, and a base to work from.

"Dead Man's Chest" also left too much out. The one assumed to be causing the havoc is not provided enough personality to allow the rader the pleasure of caring for him or what is happening. I don't care that **Jonah** lost his chest and am not provided information to let me see a reason for his killing anyone that gets hold of his possessions. No curse is cast, no past history of the character is provided to make me care or understand his motivation. Reaching for gold after death seems too far-fetched for me.

Well, the printing is good overall, so let's hope for better entertainment in the future issues.

LYNN HANSEN
1480 Calkins, Idaho Falls, ID 83402

Thanks for your comments. The concept of a "Jonah"—one who causes or is responsible for storms and tragedies at sea—is an ancient bit of sealore dating at least back to the Bible. Part of the lore states that anything connected with a Jonah is cursed, a jinx. This particular Jonah is something more than mortal—he/it is an actively evil agent. There is a hint that he is even the legendary Davy Jones, who provides the resting place for all the sea's victims. The goods from his chest than furnishes doom for the unwitting people who pilfer from it.

Send your opinions, criticisms, kudos and raves to RATTLER, c/o Kitchen Sink Press, 2 Swamp Rd., Princeton WI 54968. See you in August.

HARVEY KURTZMAN'S DELUXE 'JUNGLE BOOK' IN AUGUST!

JUNGLE BOOK, the classic full-length comic *book* created in 1959 by **Harvey Kurtzman**, will be published in a deluxe Kitchen Sink Press edition this August.

The new volume will be over 150 pages long and measure 8¾ by 10½ inches. All the stories will be reproduced full-size directly from the original art in Kurtzman's archives. The format will be hardcover only, with full color covers and smythe-sewn binding, at a retail price of **$25**.

Robert Crumb provides the introduction.

There will be short interviews with Kurtzman and historical perspectives given before each story.

Harvey Kurtzman's Jungle Book is a rare solo effort by the master satirist who normally collaborated with such top cartoonists as Will Elder, Wally Wood, Jack Davis, etc. It was produced between the period when his magazine *Humbug* went out of business and before *Help!* began production. Originally published as a Ballantine pocketbook (which reproduced the art poorly), the hard-to-find paperback has garnered almost mythical status.

The four stories:

- "Thelonius Violence," a parody of TV's "Peter Gunn" set to jazz music — the 50s answer to today's "Miami Vice" set to rock music. Kurtzman's famed rhythmic storytelling is in full flower for this tale of bopsters with guns. With incredibly realistic sound effects!
- "The Organization Man in the Grey Flannel Executive Suite" is Kurtzman's jaundiced look at the publishing biz. It's a cutthroat world on top of the skyscrapers, folks, as the original incarnation of Goodman Beaver struggles his way up from crosswords to the payroll.
- "Compulsion on the Range" is a poignant story of an inept marshall who needs analysis for his slow-draw fixation. "Gunsmoke" fans will identify with the tall, dark, and ventilated lawman.
- "Decadence Degenerated" is a hilarious story about lynching, set in the good ole boy South. Kurtzman's facility with dialect is at some sort of peak here as Rottenville lives up to its name one Saturday night.

Kitchen Sink Press is proud to publish this hilarious legendary work by one of the great masters of comic art. The first of several upcoming Kurtzman projects.

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